

Nearly 500 in community receive terrorism training

By TSgt. Jim Greeley
352nd SOG public affairs

About 450 members of RAFs Lakenheath and Mildenhall got a crash course on terrorism recently when the Air Force Special Operations Command Dynamics of International Terrorism course rolled into town.

"During the class I came to realize being an American military member makes me a high profile target for anyone looking to make a point through terrorism," said TSgt. Dwight Vickers, a scheduler from the 352nd Special Operations Group. "I never really thought about that before DIT. But, I also learned a lot of things I can do to make myself harder to kill."

The DIT class, normally taught at AFSOC's Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, Fla., is Terrorism 101. And, taking the show on the road served a dual purpose - it brought valuable training to people here while saving the Air Force more than \$1 million in student TDY expenses, according to SSgt. Sonja Johnson, from the 352nd Operation Support Squadron. Johnson helped bring the course here.

"This is a basic course geared at giving students as much information as possible about the workings of terrorists and steps people can take to make themselves less of a target to terrorists," said Col. James Kingsley, the dean of academics for the AFSOC special operations school.

The special operations school offers 17 different courses at Hurlburt, but the one constantly in demand is DIT.

The course combines military subject mat-

ter experts and guest speakers to cover the gamut of terrorism. Hostage survival, kidnapping, hijacking, case studies and travel security are a few highlights. The course also examines terrorist weapons - punctuated by an explosives demonstration.

The most effective portions of the course are the guest speakers, according to Kingsley. "The guest speakers set the course apart," said Kingsley.

The people attending the course at Mildenhall heard from survivors of terrorist acts. Maj. Gen. James Dozier and his wife Judith gave a personal account of Dozier's 1981 kidnapping by the Italian Red Brigade. Dick Melhart, a survivor of the terrorist hijacking of Pan Am flight 73 in Pakistan, recounted his experience.

"Their experiences were the real thing," said SSgt. Joycelyn Bryan, from the 352nd Maintenance Squadron. "It made me think about what I would do if I was in that position."

DIT instructors actually presented the course at both Lakenheath and Mildenhall and then traveled to Brindisi, Italy, to train another 100 members of the 352nd Special Operations Group deployed in support of Operation Joint Guard.

At each location the basic message was the same. No one is immune to terrorism and being stationed overseas only increases the risk.

"The simple fact is, you're more likely to be involved in a serious traffic accident than become a victim of terrorism," said Maj. Richard Cummings, a DIT instructor. "However, you can narrow those chances even further through increased awareness of potential problems and careful planning."

Finnish general visits Lakenheath

By SrA. Jeff Capenos
Public affairs

The Chief of Staff of the Finnish Air Force along with the USAFE commander, visited RAF Lakenheath Tuesday to see first hand the air operations of a U.S. Air Force fighter wing.

As new members of the Partnership for Peace Accord, the Finnish government is furthering their cooperation and understanding with the U.S. Air Force and other nations, said Gen. Michael Ryan, U.S. Air Forces in Europe. "This is a great opportunity for the two countries to establish a foundation for the future."

Building on that foundation, the Finnish general met with the wing's senior leaders and toured the base to get a taste of day-to-day operations.

"This visit is important to me because our government recently bought F-18s and AMRAAM missile systems, and I want to see how the military utilizes these McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft," said Maj. Gen. Matti Ahola, Chief of Staff of the Finnish Air Force. "It's interesting to see how the U.S. Air Force does business and trains on a daily basis."

In addition to a tour, Ahola joined Capt. George Waring, 494th Fighter Squadron, for an F-15E ride.

"The ride was great," said the general. "I was familiar with the aircraft, being a McDonnell Douglas (as is the F-18), but it was different too. It was very interesting."

Asthma more dangerous to African Americans

By Maj. Linda J. Browne
Internal medicine

Asthma is a disease that effects up to 12 million people worldwide. But blacks with asthma are three times as likely to die from the condition as are whites.

Doctors aren't certain why blacks are at an increased risk for dying of asthma, but blacks do have both a higher prevalence and more severe asthma. The risk is much greater for blacks below the age of 15 and this risk is further accentuated by living in an urban environment.

Essentially, asthma is an inability to breathe properly. It is a chronic inflammation of the airways resulting in nonspecific airway hyperactivity and airway narrowing. Many factors have been associated with

contributing to asthma such as family, infections, allergies, socioeconomic and psychosocial conditions and environmental factors.

The main symptoms of asthma are coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath. Symptoms vary in severity from occasional mild bouts of breathlessness to daily wheezing that persists despite taking large doses of medication.

Common triggers for asthmatic wheezing include cigarette smoke, pollen, mold, animal dander, physical exercise, viral/bacterial infections of the upper or lower airways, sudden weather changes and air pollutants.

Diagnosing asthma requires a combination of history, physical and pulmonary function tests that measure lung function. Once a doctor makes a diagnosis, people should begin to take steps to control the symptoms.

For mild asthma, sometimes simply avoiding the known trigger may have a significant impact on the frequency and severity of asthma attacks. Sometimes, doctors prescribe inhaled medications that "open up" the bronchioles in the lungs to help get more air in and out. For moderate asthma, doctors may also add inhaled steroids to decrease the inflammation in the bronchioles. Patients with severe asthma usually require care in a hospital setting.

It's important that people with asthma become active participants in their own care — learning the proper technique in the use of inhalers and how to use a peak-flow meter at home. Smoking cessation and avoiding secondhand cigarette smoke are crucial elements of asthma management.

For further information regarding asthma, contact your health care provider.